AN ACT

OF THE

Commons of England

IN

Parliament assembled;

For the relief, and imployment of the Poor, and the punishing of Vagrants and other disorderly persons, within the City of *London* and Liberties thereof.

Whereby is constituted a Corporation, or Body Politick, consisting of a President, Deputy, Treasurer, and Assistants for the due ordering and putting in execution the said Act.

Printed by *Richard Cotes* Printer to the Honourable City of London, 1650.

AN ACT

FOR The Relief, and Imployment of the Poore, and the puniſhment of Vagrants, and other diſorderly Perſons, within the City of *London* and the Liberties thereof.

WHereas the neceſſity, number, and increaſe of the Poore, is very great within the City of *London*, and Liberties thereof, for want of due proviſion, for their relief and imployment; and through neglect of the due execution of ſuch Laws

and Statutes, as have beene formerly made; For remedy whereof, and for the better execution of the Lawes and Statutes heretofore made in this behalf, and for the further redreſſe of the miſchiefs intended to bee hereby remedied; Bee it enacted; by this preſent Parliament, and by the authority of the ſame, and it is hereby enacted; That from henceforth, there bee and ſhall bee a Corporation within the ſaid City of *London*, and Liberties thereof, conſiſting of a Preſident, Deputy to the Preſident, a Treaſurer, and fifty eight Aſſiſtants, whereof the Lord Major of the ſaid City, for the time being, to bee the Preſident, and tenne of the ſaid Aſſiſtants to bee of the Aldermen of the ſaid City for the time being, and the other fifty to be Freemen of, and Inhabitants of the ſaid City, choſen out of the ſeverall Wards of the ſaid City, two out of every Ward reſpectively; And that Sir *John Wollaſton*, *Iſaac Pennington*, *Thomas Atkin*, *Thomas Andrews*, *Samuell Avery*, *John Bide*, *Tho[illegible]er*, *Rowland Wilſon*, *Chriſtopher [illegible] John Dethick*, Aldermen

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of the ſaid City, ſhall bee the firſt tenne Aldermen of the preſent Aſſiſtants, and that *Francis Waterhouſe* ſhall be the preſent Deputy to the Preſident, and that *Maurice Gething*, ſhall bee the preſent Treaſurer, and that *James Ruſſell*, *Richard Glyd*, *William Feſton*, *Tempeſt Milner*, *William Kendall*, *Toby Liſle*, *Edmund Whitwell*, *John Cock*, *Robert Mead*, *William Bromwich*, *John Everett*, *John Jones*, *John Bellamy*, *John Babington*, *Richard Garforth*, *Robert Tichbourne*, *John Perrin*, *Thomas Bromfield*, *Samuel Moyer*, *Dierich Hoſt*, *Richard Coyſh*, *Nicholas Corſellis*, *William Pennoyer*, *Chriſtopher Loaves*, *Lawrence Steel*, *Richard Floyde*, *Thomas Jenner*, *Lawrence Brinley*, *Rice Buſh*, *Thomas White*, *Benjamin Blundell*, *Thomas Dawney*, *Abraham Babington*, *Jacob Iurin*, *Edward Odling*, *Thomas Britwell*, *Iames Story*, *Iohn Berriford*, *William Wyberd*, *Richard Waring*, *Iohn Dodd*, *VValter Lee*, *Harman Sheaf*, *Iohn Fletcher*, *Owen Rowe*, *Mark Hilſley*, *Iohn Stone*, and *Clement Ireton*, Citizens of *London*, ſhall be the other Aſſiſtants, and that the ſucceeding Deputy, and

Teaſurer ſhall from henceforth, and from time to time bee *E*ligible by the ſaid Corporation, or any ſeven, or more of them, yearly on the five and twentieth day of *June*, or within twenty eight dayes then next following, and ſhall have hereby power and authority, and are hereby authoriſed at any time or times, upon juſt and reaſonable cauſe, to amove the ſaid Deputy, and Treaſurer for the time being, or either of them from their places; And upon ſuch removall, or death of them, or either of them to elect one other Deputy, and Treaſurer, or either of them into the ſaid place, or places reſpectively; And that ſuch five of the tenne Aldermen (being Aſsiſtants) as the Common=councell of the City of *London* think fit, ſhall fall off, or be amoved yearely, on the ſaid five and twentyeth day of *Iune*, or within twenty eight dayes after; And that other five Aldermen ſhall bee yearly elected, by the ſaid Common=councell, on the day and time aforeſaid, to bee Aſſiſtants in the place of ſuch as ſhall ſo fall off, or bee amoved; And that

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ſuch five and twenty of the other aſsiſtants, as the ſeveral Wards reſpectively ſhall think fit, ſhall likewiſe fall off, or bee amoved yearly on the ſaid five and twentyeth day of *June*, or within twenty eight dayes after; and that five and twenty other perſons, ſhall bee yearly elected within the time aforeſaid by the Inhabitants of every Ward reſpectively, to bee Aſſiſtants in the places of ſuch as ſhall dye, or bee amoved as aforeſaid; And that the firſt choice of all the ſaid Aſſiſtants ſhall bee made upon the five and twentyeth day of *June*, in the year of our Lord God 1650. or within twenty eight dayes then next following. And it is further enacted, by the authority aforeſaid; That the ſaid Preſident, Deputy, Treaſurer, and Aſsiſtants for the time being ſhall for ever hereafter, in name and fact, bee one Body Politique, and Corporate in Law, to all intents and perpoſes, and ſhall have a perpetuall Succeſsion, and ſhall bee called by the name of the Preſident, and Governours, for the Poore of the City of *London*, and Liberties thereof, and ſue or plead

plead, or bee ſued and impleaded by the name aforeſaid, in all Courts and places of Iudicature within this Nation; And by that name ſhall and may without Licenſe in Mortmaine purchaſe, or receive any Lands, or Tenements, Hereditaments, not exceeding the yearly value of two thouſand pounds of the Gift, Alienation, or deviſe of any perſon or perſons, who are hereby without further Licenſe, enabled to give the ſame, and any Goods, Chattels; or ſummes of Money, whatſoever, to the uſe, intent, and purpoſe, hereafter limited, and appointed; And the ſaid Corporation, or any ſeven of them ſhall have hereby power, and authority from time to time, to meete and keepe Courts, for the ends and purpoſes in this Act expreſſed, at ſuch time and place, as ſhall bee appointed by the ſaid Preſident, or his Deputy, who are hereby required upon deſire of any foure of the ſaid Corporation, at any time to cauſe a Court to bee warned accordingly; And ſhall have hereby authority from time to time, to

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make, and appoint a Common Seale for the uſe of the ſaid Corporation. And it is further enacted by the authority aforeſaid; That it is, and ſhall bee lawfull to, and for the ſaid Preſident and Governours of the ſaid Corporation, for the time being, or any two of them, from time to time, to apprehend, or cauſe to bee apprehended, any Rogues, Vagrants, Sturdy Beggers, idle, and diſorderly perſons within the ſaid City, and Liberties, and to cauſe them to bee ſet and kept to work; And ſuch of them as by any former Statute, are declared to bee Rogues, to bee duly puniſhed by putting in the Stocks, or whipping, as they ſhall finde cauſe; And ſhall alſo have power to diſpoſe of them to their places of birth, or laſt abode, as the caſe, according to the Laws and Statutes in that caſe provided ſhall require; And alſo that it ſhall bee lawfull for the ſaid Preſident, and Governours, or any two them, to apprehend, or cauſe to bee apprehended, and kept

at work. All ſuch other Poore perſons, and Baſtard children, and other Poore children able to worke, and inhabiting within the ſaid City and Liberties, who are chargeable to any Pariſh, or have not ſufficient to maintaine themſelves; and in caſe of their refuſall ſo to work; That then it ſhall and may be lawfull, to and for the ſaid Preſident, and Governours, or any ſeven of them to puniſh, or cauſe to bee puniſhed as Vagrants, ſuch perſons ſo refuſing to work; And bee it further enacted by the authority aforeſaid, as well for the purpoſes aforeſaid, as for the better execution of Juſtice within the ſaid City and Liberties, That all and every the Aldermen of the ſaid City, which hath performed and paſſed, or that hereafter performe and paſſe the Office of Sheriffe of *London*, at the end of his, and their Sherivalty, and during ſuch time as hee and they ſhall continue Alderman, taking the Oath of a Juſtice of Peace appointed by Parliament, which the Major,

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Recorder, or either of them, hereby have power to administer unto them, shall bee hereby a Justice of Peace to all intents and purposes whatsoever; and shall and may from henceforth doe and execute accordingly within the said City and Liberties thereof without any other Commission, any Law, Statute, Custome, or Usage in any wise to the contrary notwithstanding. Provided alwayes, That no Sessions of the Peace shall bee holden, and kept within the said City and Liberties, without the presence, or appointment of the Major, or Recorder, and the presence of three, or more of other Justices of Peace of the said City for the time being. And bee it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in regard of the great inequality of the ordering, and relieving of the Poore through the different abilities of the severall and respective Wards, in the City of *London*, and Liberties thereof, The said Corporation or any seven of them, shall bee hereby

authoriſed with conſent of the Com-mon-Councell of the ſaid City, to divide the ſeverall Wards with the Poore, and Stock to them belonging, into foure e-quall parts and proportions, for the more effectuall and indifferent reliefe of the Poore, and the avoiding future differen-ces, and diſſentions betweene the rich and poore Pariſhes. And it is enacted by the authority aforeſaid, for the better reliefe of impotent aged perſons, and others not able to worke, and fit to bee relieved, and for the imploying of the other Poore as a-foreſaid, within the ſaid City and Liberties, and providing all things for the execution of the work, intended by this Act; That if the ſaid Preſident and Governours ſhall certifie their want and defect, either of a preſent ſtock for the foundation thereof, or for ſupply thereof for the future, and what ſumme and ſummes of Money they thinke fit for the ſame under their Com-mon Seale to the Common-Councell of the ſaid City; That thereupon the ſaid Com-

Common-councell are hereby authoriſed and required from time to time to ſet downe and aſcertaine ſuch competent ſumme or ſummes of Money for the purpoſes aforeſaid, and the ſame to proportion out upon the ſeverall Wards as they ſhall thinke fit; And that thereupon the Aldermen, Deputy, and Common-councell ment of euery Ward, or the greater number of them, ſhall have power and authority, and are hereby required equally and indifferently, according to proportion appointed for the ſeverall Wards as aforeſaid, to taxe and rate the ſeverall Inhabitants within the ſaid reſpective VVards: with which taxe, if any perſon or perſons, ſhall finde him, or themſelves grieved, as ſuppoſing the ſame to bee unequall, hee and they ſhall, and may make their complaint knowne to the Juſtices of the Peace, at the next open Seſſions, who ſhall take ſuch finall order therein, as in like caſes is already by the Law provided. And it is further enacted by the authority afore-

ſaid, That it ſhall, and may bee lawfull to, and for the ſaid Preſident and Governours upon taxations, and diſtributions made as aforeſaid, the ſame being made knowne to them by the ſaid *Al*dermen, or Deputy of the ſaid ſeverall Wards by their Certificate in writing under their hands, to make Warrants under the hands of them, or any two of them, to bee directed to any one, or more of their Officers, to demand, gather and receive, of every perſon and perſons, ſuch ſumme and ſummes of Money, as ſhall bee aſſeſſed upon them by vertue of the *Ta*xations and Contributions aforeſaid; *An*d for default of payment within tenne dayes after demand made thereof, or notice in writing left at the dwelling houſe, or lodging of every perſon ſo aſſeſſed to leavy the ſame by diſtreſſe and ſale of the goods of every ſuch perſon, and after ſatisfaction made, to reſtore the ſurpluſage to the party ſo diſtrained. And it is further enacted by the authority aforeſaid; That the aforeſaid Corporation

Corporation or any ſeven perſons, Members thereof, or the ſaid Deputy and Treaſurer (for the time being) or one of them together with one or more of the Aldermen of the ſaid City, Members of the ſaid Corporation, ſhall and may within the ſaid City and Liberties doe and execute in every reſpect for the better carrying on of this worke, ſuch thing, or things, Act, or Acts, as is allowed and appointed by any Law, or Statute, to bee done and executed by any one, or more Juſtice, or Juſtices of Peace of the ſaid City, or of any County within this Realme, for and concerning the relieſe and imployment of the Poore, and the puniſhment of Vagrants, and other diſorderly perſons, and the ſetting and keeping them to worke within the ſaid City, and Liberties thereof; And to put in execution any Law or Statute, (now in force) touching binding out poore children Apprentices, for the relief of the Poore, puniſhing Rogues and Beggers; And for effect-

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ing the remedies hereby intended. And it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said President and Governours, or any seven of them, shall have power from time to time, to make and constitute Orders and By-laws, for the better relieving, regulating, and setting the poor on work, and the apprehending and punishing of rogues, vagabonds, and Beggers within the said City and *Liberties*, that have not herewith honestly to maintain themselves, and for other the matters aforesaid; Provided, the said Orders and By-Laws shall from time to time, be presented to, and allowed by the Common councell of the said City, & by three, or more of the Justices of the upper Bench, common Pleas, and Barons of the Exchequer. And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid; That the Treasurer of the said Corporation, for the time being, shall once in every year yearly, between the four and twentyeth of *June*, and the nine and twentyeth of *September*, or oftner, if need require, give a true and perfect accompt in writing of all the receipts,

ceipts, charges, and disburſements in, and about the premiſes unto the Auditors, for the time being, appointed for taking the Accompts of the Chamberlain, and Bridgemaſters of the ſaid City, and the ſaid Accompt to remain in the cuſtody of the Chamberlain of the ſaid City; And it is enacted by the authority aforeſaid, That an Ordinance made this preſent Parliament the ſeventeenth day of *December*, 1647. and every clauſe, and thing therin contained concerning any proviſion and releaf for the Poor of *London*, and the Liberties thereof, bee and are hereby made Null and repealed; And it is enacted by the authority aforeſaid, That it ſhall and may bee lawfull to and for the ſaid Preſident and Governours, or ſeven of them, to make enquiry for, and after any charitable gift, or grant heretofore given and appointed, or hereafter to be given and appointed to, and for the maintenance & relief of the Poor within the ſaid City and Liberties thereof, and to act and proceed thereupon for diſcovering and reforming the miſimployment thereof, in ſuch

manner as any Commiſſioners for charitable uſes, may doe by vertue of the Satute of 43. *Eliz. Chap.* 4. And that the ſaid Preſident and Governours ſhall, and may by themſelves, or ſuch as they ſhall appoint under their Common Seal, freely, and without fees ſearch in any Courts, or Offices for any Records, or evidences, for the diſcovery of any matter or thing concerning the ſame, And it is further enacted, That the ſaid Preſident and Governors, or any twenty, or more of them, being aſſembled together, ſhall have hereby power to choſe, and entertaine al ſuch Officers and others, as ſhall bee needfull to be imployed in, and about the premiſes, and them, or any of them from time to time to remove, as they ſhall ſee cauſe; And upon the death or removall of them, or any of them to chooſe others in their places for the carrying on of this work, and to make, and give ſuch reaſonable allowances unto them, or any of them, out of the ſtock and revenue belonging to the ſaid corporation, as they ſhall think fit; and it is enacted by the authority aforeſaid, for the further releaf, & imploying of the ſaid poor,

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within the ſaid City and Liberties thereof, That the ſaid Preſident and Governors, or any ſeven of them ſhal have hereby power to erect one or more work-houſe or work-houſes for receiving, relieving, & ſetting the poor to work, & one or more houſe or houſes of Correction, as they ſhal think fit, for puniſhing of Rogues, Vagabonds, & beggers; And it is further enacted by the authority aforeſaid, that if upon any action, ſuit or plaint, to be commenced, or proſecuted by any perſon or perſons, in any Court whatſoever, againſt the ſaid Preſident & Governors, any of the ſaid Juſtices of the Peace hereby authoriſed, or any of them, or any perſon or perſons, for doing, or executing any thing by their, or any of their Order, Warrant, command, or direction, or coming into their, or any of their aid, or aſſiſtance, in, about, or concerning the premiſes, the Defendant or Defendants may plead the generall iſſue of not guilty, and ſhall & may give the ſpeciall matter in evidence, and if upon triall of the cauſe, it ſhall appear the ſaid defendant, or defendants, did act or doe the matter in queſtion by vertue of this Act, or that the

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matter of fact whereupon the iſſue is joined, was done in any other county, then where the ſame fact is laid to be done, That in ſuch caſe the Jury that ſhall try the ſame, ſhal find the defendant, or defendants in every ſuch action, plaint, or ſuit, not guilty; And if in any action, plaint, or ſuit, the plaintiffe or plaintiffs become non ſuit, or ſuffer any diſcontinuance thereof, or verdict ſhall paſs againſt him, or them; that in every the ſaid caſes, the defendant, or defendants ſhall have double coſts, and all other advantages & remedies, as in other caſes where coſts by the Laws of this Realm are given to defendants; And it is further enacted by the authority aforeſaid that all Sheriffs, Baylyffs Conſtables and all other Officers, and Miniſters of Juſtice, ſhall be aiding and aſſiſting to the ſaid Corporation, or any of them, and unto all ſuch Officers as ſhal be imployed by them for the better executing, & performance of the ſaid ſervice. *H. Scobell, Cleric. Parliament.*

Die Lunæ, 7. Maij, 1649.

Ordered by the Commons aſſembled in Parliament, that this Act be forthwith Printed and publiſhed.

Hen. Scobell, Cler. Parliament.

FINIS.